

# UKEF supports major hospital construction in Ivory Coast

- UKEF's largest ever loan in francophone Africa will finance specialised medical and non-medical equipment sourced from the UK.
- The project will provide fully-equipped modern healthcare services for a catchment area of more than a million people.

A €241m dual-tranched UKEF facility will help NMS Infrastructure Limited (NMSI) build six new hospitals through an export contract with the Côte d'Ivoire Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene. The €326 million project will see the design, construction and equipping of six hospitals to be located at Bouaké, Boundiali, Katiola, Kouto, Minignan and Ouangolodougou, as well as post-completion training and technical support.

The financing structure involves a combination of buyer credit and direct lending to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire. Work on the hospitals has started and is expected to be completed in 2024.

GKB Ventures (GKB), as appointed advisors to Côte d'Ivoire's Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOF) ran a fully transparent and competitive tender process for the financing of the project with a select group of international lenders.

On completion of the tender process, MUFG Bank was selected as the preferred lender and Mandated Lead Arranger for financing of the Project. GKB provided ongoing advice to MOF and NMSI throughout the tender, execution and documentation process. KSK law firm (Abidjan) acted as legal counsel to the borrower on the project and Ashurst acted as legal counsel for the lenders.

The project is an extremely high priority for the Government of Côte d'Ivoire as is the issue of long-dated, low cost financing. Raising the commercial loan in advance of the UKEF tranche allowed the project to proceed quickly whilst providing full price transparency to MOF across both tranches of the financing.

UKEF has appetite of up to £2 billion to support new business in Côte d'Ivoire, having doubled its capacity in recent years, and is able to provide guarantees for financing in CFA francs.

**Emma Wade-Smith, HM Trade Commissioner for Africa, said:**

This record-setting UKEF facility in West Africa demonstrates the UK Government's strong commitment to supporting sustainable economic growth across the African continent. It provides a further example of the positive impact that UK companies are making, working in partnership with governments and the private sector in Africa to spur growth, investment and job creation. It also helps to illustrate the exciting range of opportunities we see for UK

companies looking to grow and expand into new markets in Africa.

**HE Catherine Brooker, HM Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, said:**

NMSI's project will greatly improve the availability of modern healthcare services in Cote d'Ivoire. Thanks to the UK government's support, through UKEF, UK companies are ideally placed to support infrastructure development in West Africa and to seize the huge export potential that brings.

**Jean-Marc BROU Advisor to the Prime Minister in charge of Finance, said:**

With the support of UKEF and GKB, we were able to put in place a fully transparent, timely, cost-effective and affordable financing solution that will make this important project a success. The ability of UKEF to provide direct loans was key to securing this deal.

**Frederik Hsu, Chairman of NMSI, said:**

This health infrastructure project will contribute to the continued growth of the economy for years to come and the financing has been realised through the combined efforts of GKB, UKEF, MUFG and the Lenders. DIT and UKEF have played an important role in the achievement of our exporting success.

**Ed Harkins, Managing Director of GKB Ventures, said:**

We are delighted to have been appointed by the MOF as financial advisor on this important project. The tender process for the funding provided the Government of Cote D'Ivoire with full pricing transparency, competitive tension and full accountability. The highly competitive financing has been delivered in spite of an extremely volatile market. Being able to tap the OECD fixed rate at the lowest end of the curve was particularly important and is one of the lowest rates seen since the introduction of the OECD CIRR in 1993. This provision of UKEF direct lending significantly enhances the affordability of the project for the Borrower and provides certainty of funding to our client at a very attractive fixed rate.

## **About UK Export Finance**

[UK Export Finance](#) is the UK's export credit agency and a government department, working along-side the Department for International Trade as an integral part of its strategy and operations.

Established in 1919, it exists to ensure that no viable UK export should fail for a lack of finance from the private market. It provides finance and insurance to help exporters win, fulfil and get paid for export contracts.